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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000642

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SUBJECT: AFRICAN TOUR D'HORIZON WITH UK LORD TRIESMAN

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN R. BOLTON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

11. (C) SUMMARY. On March 20 Ambassador Bolton met with UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Lord

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Triesman to discuss Horn of Africa issues - namely Sudan, Ethiopia/Eritrea and Somalia - as well as the Great Lakes region (in particular the DRC), Charles Taylor and Zimbabwe. Lord Triesman was very supportive of U.S. efforts across the continent, especially in his optimism for chances of success in the Ethiopia/Eritrea border dispute. Lord Triesman's optimism did not spread to his assessment of Zimbabwe's instability, and Ambassador Bolton offered to raise the country's situation with USAID Administrator Tobias to examine possibilities for economic assistance. END SUMMARY.

SUDAN NEEDS DIPLOMATIC, NOT ARGUMENTATIVE, APPROACH

12. (C) Lord Triesman concurred with Ambassador Bolton's assessment of the difficulties facing transition of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) to a UN operation. Lord Triesman acknowledged that while an argumentative approach was sometimes necessary - his 'shouting match' in Khartoum led to movement by the Government of National Unity (GNU) on delivery of 105 Canadian Armored Personnel Carriers, for example - diplomacy would ultimately win the day. However, Lord Triesman cautioned that too many initiatives, including the newly-minted Group of Friends of Darfur which the UK would lead, would create 'havoc.' Lord Triesman was disillusioned with the progress of the Abuja Peace Talks, despite the presence of high-level UK observers. Ambassador Bolton stressed the need to look at the Darfur peace process more comprehensively and to formulate a concerted North Africa - sub-Saharan Africa strategy to secure support for AMIS transition. Lord Triesman agreed that more time should

be devoted to monitoring activities of the Arab League, calling Sudan's securing of its chairmanship under the international community's nose 'scandalous.'

ETHIOPIA/ERITREA SITUATION STANDS 'GOOD CHANCE OF SUCCESS'

13. (C) Lord Triesman agreed with Ambassador Bolton that the Security Council stood a good chance of success in resolving the Ethiopia/Eritrea border issue as long as it remained focused on underlying causes of the dispute. Lord Triesman noted that while Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles seemed acutely aware of pressures surrounding his willingness to negotiate on this issue, Eritrean President Isaias seemed to have no such sense of the potential gravity of the situation, particularly the scale of the forces he would face were he to let the situation escalate. The current difficulty in Lord Triesman's assessment was finding the right time to inject into discussions with the sides issues of normalized relations (port access, e.g.), something he was working with A/S Frazer and GEN Fulford to accomplish.

NOT SURE IF 800 TROOPS WILL MAKE ENOUGH OF A DIFFERENCE IN THE DRC

14. (C) Lord Triesman described for Ambassador Bolton the European Union (EU) planned deployments to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a French-German detachment with 2 components of 400 troops apiece that would not be under UN command and control, to be preceded by a pre-deployment group that would lay the groundwork. However, Lord Triesman was not sure if these 800 troops would ultimately be able to make a tangible difference in the DRC, given that they would be in and around Kinshasa but not stationed in the volatile east. Lord Triesman remarked that Germany and France were not convinced of the utility of putting more boots on the ground, especially if airlift became an issue. In response to a question from Ambassador Bolton about a training mission for the EU forces, Lord Triesman said that UN Department of

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Peacekeeping Operations had made this suggestion as well but that such a mission would be conducted separately under the umbrella of longer-term security sector reform.

NO AID TO SOMALIA TIL POLITICAL WORK IS DONE

15. (C) Lord Triesman was emphatic that HMG was not prepared to give much aid to Somalia until the political work there was done, including a meeting of all parties in Somalia. He was critical of Italy's approach toward the Somali reconciliation process, which in his view rewarded the 'good guys,' who he acknowledged were hard to identify in the first place. Lord Triesman spoke favorably about Somaliland's stability and speculated about how the international community could promote its success to neighboring Puntland without 'Balkanizing' the country. Ambassador Bolton agreed that Somali normality could have a calming effect on the entire Horn region and suggested that sustained international attention on this area could provide a good example for the rest of the continent and would prevent the need for peace support operations ad infinitum.

ONE LAST CHANCE IN ZIMBABWE?

16. (C) Lord Triesman was particularly seized with the current plight of Zimbabwe, where he speculated that inflation rates were likely twice the 'official' figure of 750 percent and could accordingly lead to the country's 'implosion' at any time. He feared that the potential displacement of up to six million people across the border to South Africa and he raised the possibility of a visit by SYG Annan to address this problem. Ambassador Bolton shared Lord Triesman's concern about possible displacement, noting that political instability, massive costs, and deaths would result. Ambassador Bolton stressed that governments in the region needed to be increasingly engaged and that improvement would

come if President Mugabe left office. Ambassador Bolton  
offered to raise the country's situation with USAID  
Administrator Tobias to examine possibilities for assistance.  
BOLTON